

TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES
DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US)
CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371

2703/FBR

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 CFR 1.5)

09/308005

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.

PCT/AU97/00759 ✓

INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE

NOV. 10, 1997 ✓

PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED

NOV. 10, 1996 11-13-96

TITLE OF INVENTION

GAMING MACHINE ✓

APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US

NICHOLAS LUKE BENNETT ✓

Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:

1. ☒ This is a **FIRST** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
2. ☐ This is a **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
3. ☐ This express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)) at any time rather than delay examination until the expiration of the applicable time limit set in 35 U.S.C. 371(b) and PCT Articles 22 and 39(1).
4. ☒ A proper Demand for International Preliminary Examination was made by the 19th month from the earliest claimed priority date.
5. ☐ A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2))
 - a. ☒ is transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ has been transmitted by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US).
6. ☐ A translation of the International Application into English (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).
7. ☐ Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3))
 - a. ☐ are transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ have been transmitted by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired.
 - d. ☐ have not been made and will not be made.
8. ☐ A translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).
9. ☒ An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)).
10. ☐ A translation of the annexes to the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)).

Items 11. to 16. below concern document(s) or information included:

11. ☒ An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
12. ☒ An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.
13. ☒ A FIRST preliminary amendment.
☐ A SECOND or SUBSEQUENT preliminary amendment.
14. ☐ A substitute specification.
15. ☐ A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.
16. ☒ Other items or information:

Express Mail No. EJ052617120 US

Date: May 10, 1999

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Shahan Islam

17. ☐ The following fees are submitted:

BASIC NATIONAL FEE (37 CFR 1.492 (a) (1) - (5)) :

Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482)
nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO
and International Search Report not prepared by the EPO or JPO \$970.00

International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to
USPTO but International Search Report prepared by the EPO or JPO. \$840.00

International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but
international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO \$760.00

International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482)
but all claims did not satisfy provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) \$670.00

International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482)
and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) \$96.00

ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =

CALCULATIONS PTO USE ONLY

\$ 970.00

Surcharge of \$130.00 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than ☐ 20 ☐ 30
months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(e)).

\$

CLAIMS	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE
Total claims	19 - 20 =	0	X \$18.00
Independent claims	3 - 3 =	0	X \$78.00
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM(S) (if applicable)			+ \$260.00
TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =			\$ 970.00
Reduction of 1/2 for filing by small entity, if applicable. A Small Entity Statement must also be filed (Note 37 CFR 1.9, 1.27, 1.28).			\$
SUBTOTAL =			\$ 970.00
Processing fee of \$130.00 for furnishing the English translation later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(f)).			\$
TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =			\$ 970.00
Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31). \$40.00 per property			+ \$ 40.00
TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =			\$ 1010.00
			Amount to be: refunded \$ charged \$ 1010.00

a. ☐ A check in the amount of \$_____ to cover the above fees is enclosed.

b. ☒ Please charge my Deposit Account No. 06-0923 in the amount of \$1010 to cover the above fees.
A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

c. ☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any
overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-0923. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.

SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

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REGISTRATION NUMBER

09/308005

510 Rec'd PCT/70 10 MAY 1999

"Express Mail" No.: EJ05261720 US

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Shahar Islam

2703/FBR

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Nicholas Luke Bennett
Serial No.: Unassigned
(Int'l Appln PCT/AU97/00759)
Filed May 10, 1999
For: Gaming Machine

Examiner: Unassigned

Group Art Unit: Unassigned

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Honorable Commissioner of
Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Please cancel all claims of the International Application, as published, and add new claims 1-

19 as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (New) A gaming machine having a display means, and a game control means arranged to control images displayed on the display means, the game control means being arranged to play

a game in which a player makes a selection of a series of indicia chosen from a larger group of indicia, that selection defining the player's selected indicia, the game control means being arranged to generate a series of indicia drawn at random from the larger group of indicia, the display means being adapted to display, in a predetermined location, those indicia which have been generated by the game control means for comparison with the player's selected indicia, with a prize being awarded if more than a predetermined number of matches of the player's selected indicia with the indicia generated by the game control means occur, characterized in that a plurality of games are played simultaneously, with the indicia drawn at random for each game being drawn from separate groups initially corresponding to the indicia contained in the larger group of indicia, but with each game utilizing the same player's selected indicia and in that each game has a predetermined display area on the screen area distinct from the other games.

2. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the indicia are numbers and the predetermined display areas on the screen which are arranged to display the numbers generated by the game control means, are a series of columns, arranged side by side and wherein as each separate game proceeds, the display is arranged to show the series of generated numbers for each game which are potentially matching with the player's selected numbers, drop into the column associated with that particular game to be retained for display purposes in that column if that number corresponds to one of numbers chosen by the player and wherein if the number does not match the chosen numbers, the number is caused to disappear from the column.
3. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 2 characterized in that one of the two columns

either side of the series of columns displays the numbers chosen by the player.

4. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 3, wherein the other of the two columns displays the prizes awarded for each number of matching indicia.
5. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 2 wherein the selected numbers are displayed as representations of numbered balls.
6. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 1 wherein the game includes a wild indicia feature in which a wild indicia drops into a first predetermined display area matches one of the indicia chosen by the player, registers in the first predetermined display area, and then transfers to a second predetermined display area, adjacent the first predetermined area, leaving a duplicate of itself in the first predetermined display area, and then transfers from the second predetermined display area to a next adjacent third predetermined display area and continues in the same manner from area to adjacent area in sequence until the wild indicia has transferred to all the predetermined display areas, wherein if the wild indicia lands in a predetermined display area which has already received and retained an indicia which is identical to the wild indicia, the wild indicia changes to a different one of the player's selected indicia which is not already present in that predetermined display area, before transferring to the next adjacent predetermined display area.
7. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 5 wherein the game includes a free ball feature in which a number of extra balls are generated on the occurrence of a predetermined number of balls in a column matching the player's selected numbers.
8. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 5 wherein a prize is awarded if all the numbers selected by the player appear distributed anywhere in the game columns being played.

9. (New) A gaming machine having a display means, and a game control means arranged to control images displayed on the display means, the game control means being arranged to play a game in which a player enters a selection of a series of numbers chosen from a larger group of numbers on the machine, the selection being the player's selected numbers, the game control means being arranged to generate a series of numbers drawn at random from the larger group of numbers, the display means being adapted to display, in a predetermined location those numbers which have been generated at random by the game control means, for comparison with the player's selected numbers, with a prize being awarded if more than a predetermined number of matches occur between the generated numbers and the player's selected numbers, characterized in that a plurality of games are played in parallel with the numbers drawn at random for each game being drawn from separate groups initially corresponding to the numbers contained in the larger group of numbers, but with each game utilizing the same player selection of numbers, and wherein each game has a predetermined display area on the screen area distinct from the predetermined display areas of the other games on the screen which are arranged to display the numbers generated by the game control means, the predetermined display areas comprising a series of columns arranged side by side, and wherein as each separate game proceeds, the display shows the series of generated numbers for each game drop into the column associated with that game to be retained for display purposes in that column if that number corresponds to one of the player's selected numbers and wherein if the number does not match any of the player's selected numbers, the number is caused to disappear from that column.
10. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 9 wherein the numbers are displayed as

representations of numbered balls and the game includes a wildball feature in which a ball drops into the first game column adopts a value which equates with one of the numbers chosen by the player, registers in the first column, and then transfers to a second column, leaving a duplicate of itself in the first column, transfers from the second column to a third column, leaving a duplicate of itself in the second column and continues moving from column to column until all the columns have been visited by the wildball.

11. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 10 wherein if the wildball lands in a column and that column has already received and retained a ball having the number adopted by the wildball, the wild ball changes to a different one of the players selected numbers which is not already present in that column, before transferring to the next column.
12. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 11 wherein a prize is awarded if all the numbers selected by the player appear distributed anywhere in the columns being played.
13. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 12 wherein the gaming machine includes a free ball feature in which a number of extra balls are generated on the occurrence of a predetermined number of balls in a column matching the player's selected numbers.
14. (New) A gaming machine having a display means, and a game control means arranged to control images displayed on the display means, the game control means being arranged to play a game in which a player makes a selection of a series of indicia chosen from a larger group of indicia on the machine, that selection defining the player's selected indicia, the game control means being arranged to generate a series of indicia drawn at random from the larger group of indicia, the display means being adapted to display, in a predetermined location, those indicia which have been generated by the game control means for comparison with the

player's selected indicia, with a prize being awarded if more than a predetermined number of matches of the player's selected indicia with the indicia generated by the game control means occur, characterized in that a plurality of parallel games are played simultaneously, with the indicia drawn at random for each game being drawn from separate groups initially corresponding to the indicia contained in the larger group of indicia, but with each game utilizing the same player's selected indicia and wherein each game has a predetermined display area on the screen area distinct from the other games.

15. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 14 wherein the indicia comprise representations of numbered balls and the game includes a free ball feature in which a number of extra balls are generated on the occurrence of a predetermined number of balls in a column matching the player's selected numbers.
16. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 14 wherein a prize is awarded if all the indicia selected by the player appear distributed anywhere in the game columns being played.
17. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 14, wherein the predetermined display areas on the screen which are arranged to display the numbers generated by the game control means, are a series of columns, arranged side by side and wherein as each separate game proceeds, the display is arranged to show the series of potentially matching numbers for each game drop into the column associated with that particular game to be retained for display purposes in that column if that number corresponds to one of the numbers chosen by the player and wherein if the number does not match the chosen numbers, the number is caused to disappear from the column.
18. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 17 wherein the columns define the number of

games which may be played simultaneously and the player may make a selection on the machine to chose the number of column which are to be played in parallel.

19. (New) A gaming machine as claimed in claim 1 wherein the predetermined areas define the number of games which may be played simultaneously and the player may make a selection on the machine to chose the number of areas and thus games which are to be played simultaneously. --

REMARKS

This is preliminary amendment submitted only to remove a number of improper multiple dependencies, and to make other changes to the claims to better conform to U.S. practice.

The amendments do not raise new matter.

Applicant respectfully reserves the right to bring back any dependent/multiple dependent claims; the cancellation of multiple dependent claims does not constitute a waiver of any subject matter.

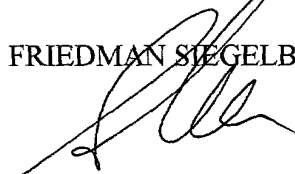
CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner require or consider it advisable that the specification, claims and/or drawings be further amended or corrected in formal respects in order to place the case in condition for final allowance, then it is respectfully requested that such amendment or correction be carried out by Examiner's amendment and the case passed to issue. Alternatively, should the Examiner feel that the personal discussion might be helpful in advancing this case to allowance, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

FRIEDMAN SIEGELBAUM LLP



Shahan Islam, Esq. (Reg. No.32,507)

Dated: May 10, 1999
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GAMING MACHINEBackground of the Invention

The present invention relates to gaming machines of the type generally referred to as slot machines, fruit machines, or poker machines. and in particular the invention provides a game to be played on such a machine.

Description of the prior art

Players who regularly play gaming machines, quickly tire of particular games and it is therefore necessary for manufacturers of gaming machines to come up with either innovative game features that add interest to the games provided on such machines, or provide new games in order to keep the players amused and willing to continue playing gaming machines.

Recently, the gaming machine market has experienced considerable growth and there is intense competition between manufacturers of gaming machines to supply the various existing and new venues. Clearly the revenue raised by an operator of a particular venue depends on the amount of money wagered. The amount of money wagered on a particular machine is related to the popularity of the machine. Thus when selecting a supplier of gaming machines, the operator of venue often pays close attention to the popularity of the various games with their patrons.

Therefore, gaming machine manufacturers are keen to devise games which are popular with players, as a mechanism for improving sales.

In particular, manufacturers regularly devise new games or game features which have not previously been seen on slot machines, in order to stimulate renewal of player interest.

The two most popular types of gaming machine either offer card games, particularly poker and variations of that game, or are machines of the traditional, and somewhat confusingly named, poker machine style (also known as fruit machines) in which the display means comprises a set of rotatable reels, each carrying a plurality of symbols, or a video simulation thereof.

However, even with the best efforts of game designers introducing features such as multi line plays, wild cards, and other similar features designed to stimulate player interest, the basic games have remained essentially the same. Gaming manufacturers have been unable to devise a new game which has achieved the same level of success and player interest as card machines and poker machines.

One game which is popular in clubs, although not on gaming machines is keno. In keno, a player picks a selection of numbers ranging from 1 to 80. A series of numbers is then drawn at random from the set 1 to 80. The player wins or loses depending on how many of the numbers the player selected match those which have been drawn at random.

One popular version of the game, known as "Club Keno" can be simultaneously played at a large number of venues in Australia. The venues include various clubs and hotels and are linked to a central system controlling the game by satellite or other suitable communication means. One game of keno is played every 15 minutes. Each player marks off their chosen numbers on a game card. The player then passes that game card and their stake money to a cashier at the venue, who processes their game card, enters the player for the next draw of keno and gives them a ticket showing the number of the game to be played and the numbers the player has chosen. One or more television screens in the venue shows an image of a board having the available numbers in the game, i.e. 1 to 80. The game commences and a series of numbers are drawn at random from the set 1 to 80. The television screen indicates which numbers have been drawn at random by displaying a ball showing the drawn number growing and apparently shooting outwards from the centre of the screen. The ball is then displayed at one side of the board and the particular square on the board which shows that particular number changes colour.

Keno and other bingo and lotto type games are particularly popular, because players choose their own numbers for each game, and therefore have more input into the game and consequently believe they can influence the outcome of the game if they choose the numbers correctly. However, whilst keno type games are perfectly satisfactorily as a diversion or side show in a hotel or club, those games are much too slow for use as a game for a gaming machine, and they supply insufficient excitement to persuade a person to play the game on a stand alone gaming machine. Further, because

the game is slow. it does not achieve a sufficiently high turnover for use on a gaming machine.

It is an object of the present invention to alleviate the disadvantages of the prior art discussed above and to provide an improved game for a gaming machine.

Summary of the Invention

The present invention consists of a gaming machine having display means, and game control means arranged to control images displayed on the display means, the game control means being arranged to play a game in which a player makes a selection, on the machine, of a series of indicia chosen from a larger group of indicia, the game control means being arranged to generate a series of indicia drawn at random from the larger group of indicia, the display means being adapted to display, in a predetermined location those indicia which have been selected for comparison with the players selected indicia, with a prize being awarded if more than a predetermined number of matches occur, characterised in that a plurality of games are played in parallel, with the indicia drawn at random for each game being drawn from separate groups initially corresponding to the indicia contained in the larger group of indicia, but with each game utilising the same player selection of indicia, and in that each game has a predetermined display area on the screen area distinct from the other games.

Thus the present invention provides a bingo type game in which a player need only make one selection of indicia, such as numbers, but which, by playing a number of games in parallel and selecting different, potentially matching, numbers at random for each game, and displaying all the games on screen creates a game with increased player interest.

In a typical embodiment the indicia are numbers.

In a preferred embodiment, the predetermined display areas on the screen which are arranged to display the numbers generated by the game control means, are a series of columns, arranged side by side. As each separate game proceeds the display is arranged to show the series of potentially matching numbers for each game drop into the column associated with that particular game to be retained for display purposes in that column if that number corresponds to one of the numbers chosen by the player. If the number does not match the chosen numbers it is caused to disappear from the column.

In a preferred embodiment one of the two columns either side of the series of columns displays the numbers chosen by the player. The other of the two columns may display the prizes awarded for each quantity of matching machines.

- 5 Typically, all the selected numbers are displayed as a representations of numbered balls.

In a preferred embodiment, the game includes a wild ball feature in which a ball drops into the first game column adopts a value which equates with one of the numbers chosen by the player, registers in the first column, and then transfers to the next adjacent column leaving a duplicate of itself in the first column, and continues the process transferring from the, second column to the third, the third to the fourth, etc. If the wild ball lands in a column and that column already has received and retained a ball having the number adopted by the wild ball, the wild ball may change to a different one of the players preselected numbers which is not already present in that column, before transferring to the next column etc..

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A further preferred feature of the game when certain prizes are awarded, or events take place, extra free balls, typically three, drop into the columns.

20 **Brief Description of the Drawings**

A specific embodiment of the invention will now be described, by way of example only, and with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 shows a gaming machine having a video screen for display and playing of a game embodying the present invention:

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Figure 2 shows a schematic drawing illustrating features of a first screen display of a game embodying the present invention:

Figure 3 shows a schematic drawing illustrating features of a second screen display of the game:

Figure 4 shows artwork for a first screen display corresponding generally to the schematic drawing shown in Figure 2:

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Figure 5 shows artwork for a second screen display corresponding generally to the schematic drawing shown in Figure 3:

Figure 6 shows probability diagram relating to particular preferred feature of the game:

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Figure 7 illustrates a further preferred feature of the game; and

Figure 8 is a schematic drawing of a touch screen feature of the gaming machine.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

Referring to the drawings, Figure 1 shows a gaming machine. 5 generally indicated at 1, adapted to play a game embodying the present invention.

The machine is of the type having a video display screen 2. The game may be initiated and controlled by one or more push buttons 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E, 4F, in conjunction with touch screen "buttons" described below. 10 The top box 6 on top of the machine carries an artwork panel 8 which displays the various winning combinations for which a prize is paid on the machine.

In the following detailed description, the methodology of the embodiments will be described, and it is to be understood that it is within 15 the capabilities of the non-inventive worker in the art to introduce the methodology on any standard micro-processor based gaming machine by means of appropriate programming.

Figure 2 shows a first screen display for the game.

The first screen 10 displays 80 white balls clearly numbered 1 to 80 20 in two groups, (numbered 12 and 14 respectively) of 40 balls. The machine includes a touch screen feature, described later, and when a ball is touched by a player, it is transferred over to a vertical column 16 on the left hand side of the screen. The vertical column of balls is put in ascending order starting from the bottom. The prizes for the number of balls selected, credits 25 bet per game and the number of hits is displayed on a score table generally indicated at 18. To the right of the screen at the top appears a denomination patch 20 is displayed which indicates the cost of each game which in this embodiment is 20 cents. Below the denomination patch at 22 there is an indication of the player credits available on the machine.

30 Below the indication of the credit available is an indication of the amount of credits bet per game at 24. In the described embodiment one, two, five or ten credits can be bet per game, but this can be varied.

Below the indication of the amount of credits bet there is, at 26, an indication of the potential win.

35 Across the bottom of the screen there are two message lines 30, 32 which can display various messages to the player.

The screen also displays an indication of the prize for a given number of hits at 34. In the screen shown in Figure 1, the player has selected four balls and thus has potential wins of 94 or 24 credits if four or three hits respectively are made.

5 Figure 4 shows suitable artwork displaying the main features of the screen of Figure 2.

In the described embodiment the player can play either one, three, five, eight or ten games or lines simultaneously. Since the player may bet either one, two, five or ten credits per game, this gives a maximum amount
10 bet per round of one hundred credits if a player plays ten games/columns simultaneously, staking ten credits on each game.

After inserting credit into the machine, the player selects the number of games he or she wishes to play, and then selects between three and ten balls by touching the numbered balls on the screen in the display areas 12
15 and 14. The balls which are selected/touched are transferred to the column 16 at the left hand side of the screen. If a selected ball in the column 16 is touched it is returned to its group 12 or 14. If an erase button 36 is pressed all selected balls are cancelled.

Once the player has selected their desired balls, which must be at
20 least three in number, the player presses a play button and the screen changes to a second screen display 40, shown schematically in Figure 3.

In this second display, a central grid 42 is shown which has ten columns, numbered 1A to 10A, to display a possible ten ball drops. (Only five of those columns are indicated in Figure 3). Up to eleven balls can stack
25 on top of each other in each column. The extreme left hand side of the screen displays the same column 16 of balls selected by the players as were displayed on the first screen 11. The extreme right hand side of the screen also remains the same as the first screen 10.

As stated above, in the screen display shown in Figure 3, to save
30 space, only five of the columns are displayed. Figure 5 shows an embodiment of artwork for the second screen displaying all ten columns. In that embodiment, because only eight games or columns have a stake on them, columns nine and ten are darkened. The "erase" button 36, changes to a "change balls" "button" 44.

35 The machine then randomly drops ten lots of twenty numbered balls from one to eighty, including a possible wild ball into the columns. The

games are independent so that the numbers dropped for one game/column do not influence the numbers selected to be dropped into another column. Numbers may drop into the columns simultaneously i.e one number drops into each column at the same time. or alternatively, the numbers may drop
 5 in sequence. one column after another. although the sequence is desirably fast to retain the player interest. All ten games have a twenty ball drop irrespective of whether the games have a stake on them or not.

The score table 18 from the right of the previous screen is carried over to the second screen. The score table instantaneously updates if credits
 10 bet per game is change. The game is played on this second screen 40 until the player wishes to change their selected balls or the player runs out of credits.

Pressing the change balls button (which may be a physical button or a touch screen "button" 44 such as is shown in Figure 5) returns the game to
 15 the first screen display 11. to enable a fresh selection of balls to be made.

The game includes a "wildball" feature in which a ball drops into the first game column 1A. adopts a value which equates with one of the numbers chosen by the player. registers in the first column 1A and then transfers to the next adjacent column 2A leaving a duplicate of itself in the
 20 first column and continues the process. transferring from the second column 2A to the third column 3A the third to the fourth etc. If the wildball lands in a column and that column already has received and retained a ball having the number adopted by the wildball. the wildball may change to a different one of the players preselected numbers which is not already present in that
 25 particular column before transferring to the next column. The wildball may of course first appear in a column other than the first column 1A say for example the third column 3A in which case it will just travel to the fourth to the tenth columns. The wildball will also double the prize for any win.

A second preferred feature of the game is a free balls feature.
 30 Pressing the "free balls" button when the shaded prize has been won (see Figure 9 discussed below). drops an extra three free balls in each of columns 1A to 10A.

When either the wildball appears or the extra free balls feature occurs. congratulatory sounds are produced by the machine.

35 Figure 9 is a table showing the prizes awarded for selected numbers of hits when between 3-10 balls ("number of spots marked") have been

selected. The table illustrates the credits awarded for various numbers of matches depending on how many balls were initially selected by the player. For example, if a player selected the minimum three balls and two matches occurred in one of the columns, 3 credits are awarded for that column. If 7 balls are selected, prizes are awarded for between 4 and 7 matches. The prizes are 6 credits for 4 matches and 750 credits for 7 matches. If a number of matches between the lowest number of matches for which a prize is awarded and the maximum number of matches occurs the extra 3 free balls feature occurs. The "free ball" matches are shaded in Figure 9. So for example, for the case where 7 balls are selected, if 5 or 6 matches occur, the 3 free balls feature occurs potentially improving the number of matches and the players winnings.

The player wins or loses depending on the number of matches made in each game, i.e. the number of balls retained in a column 1A to 10A corresponding to the numbers picked by the player. Thus for example in the screen shown in Figure 3 where the player has selected four balls, and paid for all the columns prizes are paid for column 1A where four balls matching all four of the selected balls wins a prize of ninety-four credits, and for column 9A in which three of the balls matched the players selected four balls and a win of twenty-four credits is paid. Columns 2, 3 and 10 have only a single ball matching the players selected balls for which a prize is not awarded.

Clearly the manner of awarding prizes to a player the number of matches required for a win, the number of wild balls, the frequency of the free balls feature, is calculated so that on average, the game will provide an appropriate rate of return as required by the regulations to the player, and also provide a profit to the gaming machine operator. For example, the credits awarded in the game shown in Figure 9 differ from those offered in the game illustrated in Figure 3.

A further particular feature of the game a "scatter prize" is illustrated in Figure 7 in which the player has selected five numbers 6, 2, 12, 8 and 20. If those five selected numbers appear anywhere in any of the ten columns 1A to 10A a bonus prize is paid. In Figure 7, number 8 appears in column 1A, number 2 in column 3A, number 6 in column 5A, number 12 in column 7A and number 20 in column 8A. Since all the player's five numbers appear in the columns, a bonus prize is paid.

Figure 6 illustrates probability diagrams relating to the wildball and the free ball drop of three extra balls.

The program to implement the game runs on a standard gaming machine control processor 131 as illustrated schematically if Figure 8. This processor forms part of a controller 130 which drives the display screen 2 and receives touch input signals from touch sensors 132 as well as receiving coin input pulses from a coin chute 133 and driving a coin payout mechanism 134.

Some of the particular features of the game are summarised below. including exemplary messages to be displayed on the message lines 30, 32.

Player Messages

Messages for the "Selection of balls" screen 11.

Scenario 1 - idle mode no credit

GAME OVER	INSERT CREDIT
-----------	---------------

Scenario 2 - after credit inserted.

Touch balls to select

Scenario 3 - after $X(X \geq 3)$ spots have been selected.

PLAY NOW or Select balls

Scenario 4 - after 10 spots have been selected.

PLAY NOW or Change balls

Balls can only be selected after credits have been inserted.
Balls can only be selected in the "Selection of balls" screen.

After 10 balls are selected the other balls are "locked out" and no other balls can be selected unless at least one of the current selections has been cancelled.

After a "PLAY X GAMES" button is pressed the game goes to the
 5 "Multigame balldrop" screen (Figures 3, 5) (pausing for approximately 2 seconds) and the 20 ball drop occurs (taking approximately 5 seconds).

When playing a "PLAY X GAMES" button is pressed and the game is already in the "Multigame balldrop" screen, the 20 balls drop in 5 seconds.

The extra 3 balls drop at a lower speed.

10

Messages for the "Multi balldrop" screen 40

Scenario 5 - after a game has been played with no wins.

15

GAME OVER PLAY NOW

Scenario 6 - when the current bet can not be repeated on at least one game.

20

Insert more credit or change bet.

Scenario 7 - zero credit after playing a game.

25

When a game is in zero credit for more than 2 minutes (without a "RESERVE" button pressed) the game returns to the "Selection of balls" screen and erases all current balls selected.

Scenario 8 - after a win (but no free balls won).

30

PLAY ON. GAMBLE or TAKE WIN

Pressing "Change balls" will take the win and return the game to the "Selection balls" screen.

Scenario 9 - after a win with free balls won.

Random comment

I like your style
Congratulations! Press "FREE BALLS"

5

Scenario 10 - after a win with "GAMBLE" selected. **This puts the game into a "Choose odds" gamble screen.**

I'm impressed
Touch x2. x3. x4. x5 or "TAKE WIN"

10

Pressing "CHANGE BALLS" will take the win and return the game to the "**Selection of balls**" screen 11.

15 Scenario 11 - after an incorrect selection in gamble.

Gamble completed
GAME OVER PLAY NOW

20 Scenario 12 - after a win when "TAKE WIN" is selected.

GAME OVER PLAY NOW

25 Scenario 13 - after a win and "CHANGE BALLS" selected. **The game returns to the "Selection of balls" screen 11.**

PLAY NOW or Select balls

30 If 10 balls were currently selected the message would be PLAY NOW or Change balls.

Scenario 14 - "ERASE" selected in the "Selection of balls" screen.

Touch balls to select

35 OR

Scenario 15 - Two of the original 10 selected balls are touched. There would now be 8 balls displayed on the left hand side vertical column.

5

PLAY NOW or Select balls

Scenario 14 will result in 80 balls being available for selection (no balls selected in vertical left hand column).

Scenario 15 will result in 8 balls being selected in the vertical left hand column.

10

Reserve Screen

To save memory the new reserved banner is to be used on the "Selection of balls" and "Multi balldrop" screens.

Thus the described embodiment of the present invention enables a player to play a number of keno or bingo type games simultaneously, but in which the player only has to make one selection of a series of numbers and which are large number up to ten games can be played in parallel at the same time, with each game being different because different numbers are being dropped into each game column. Thus the game can be made more exciting and faster moving than a single game of keno and each parallel game will typically have a different result.

15

20

Claims

1. A gaming machine having display means, and game control means arranged to control images displayed on the display means, the game control means being arranged to play a game in which a player makes a selection, on
5 the machine, of a series of indicia chosen from a larger group of indicia, the game control means being arranged to generate a series of indicia drawn at random from the larger group of indicia, the display means being adapted to display, in a predetermined location those indicia which have been selected for comparison with the players selected indicia, with a prize being awarded
10 if more than a predetermined number of matches occur, characterised in that a plurality of games are played in parallel, with the indicia drawn at random for each game being drawn from separate groups initially corresponding to the indicia contained in the larger group of indicia, but with each game utilising the same player selection of indicia, and in that each game has a
15 predetermined display area on the screen area distinct from the other games.
2. A gaming machine as claimed in claim 1, characterised in that the indicia are numbers and the predetermined display areas on the screen which are arranged to display the numbers generated by the game control means, are a series of columns, arranged side by side and wherein as each
20 separate game proceeds, the display is arranged to show the series of potentially matching numbers for each game drop into the column associated with that particular game to be retained for display purposes in that column if that number corresponds to one of the numbers chosen by the player and wherein the number does not match the chosen numbers, it is
25 caused to disappear from the column.
3. A gaming machine as claimed in claim 2 characterised in that one of the two columns either side of the series of columns displays the numbers chosen by the player.
4. A gaming machine as claimed in claim 3, wherein the other of the
30 two columns may display the prizes awarded for each number of matching indicia.
5. A gaming machine as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 4 characterised in that all the selected numbers are displayed as a representations of numbered balls.

6. A gaming machine as claimed in any preceding claim characterised in that the game includes a wildball feature in which a ball drops into the first game column adopts a value which equates with one of the indicia or numbers chosen by the player. registers in a first column. and then transfers
5 to the next adjacent column. the "second" column. leaving a duplicate of itself in the first column. and continues the process. transferring from the "second" column to the next adjacent column. the third column and so on. wherein if the wildball lands in a column and that column has already received and retained a ball having the number adopted by the wildball. the
10 wild ball may change to a different one of the players selected indicie/numbers which is not already present in that column. before transferring to the next adjacent column.

7. A gaming machine as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the game includes a free ball feature in which a number of extra free balls may
15 be provided to the player on the occurrence of a certain number of matching indicia in a column.

8. A gaming machine as claimed in any preceding claim in which a prize is awarded if all the numbers selected by the player appear distributed anywhere in the game columns being played.

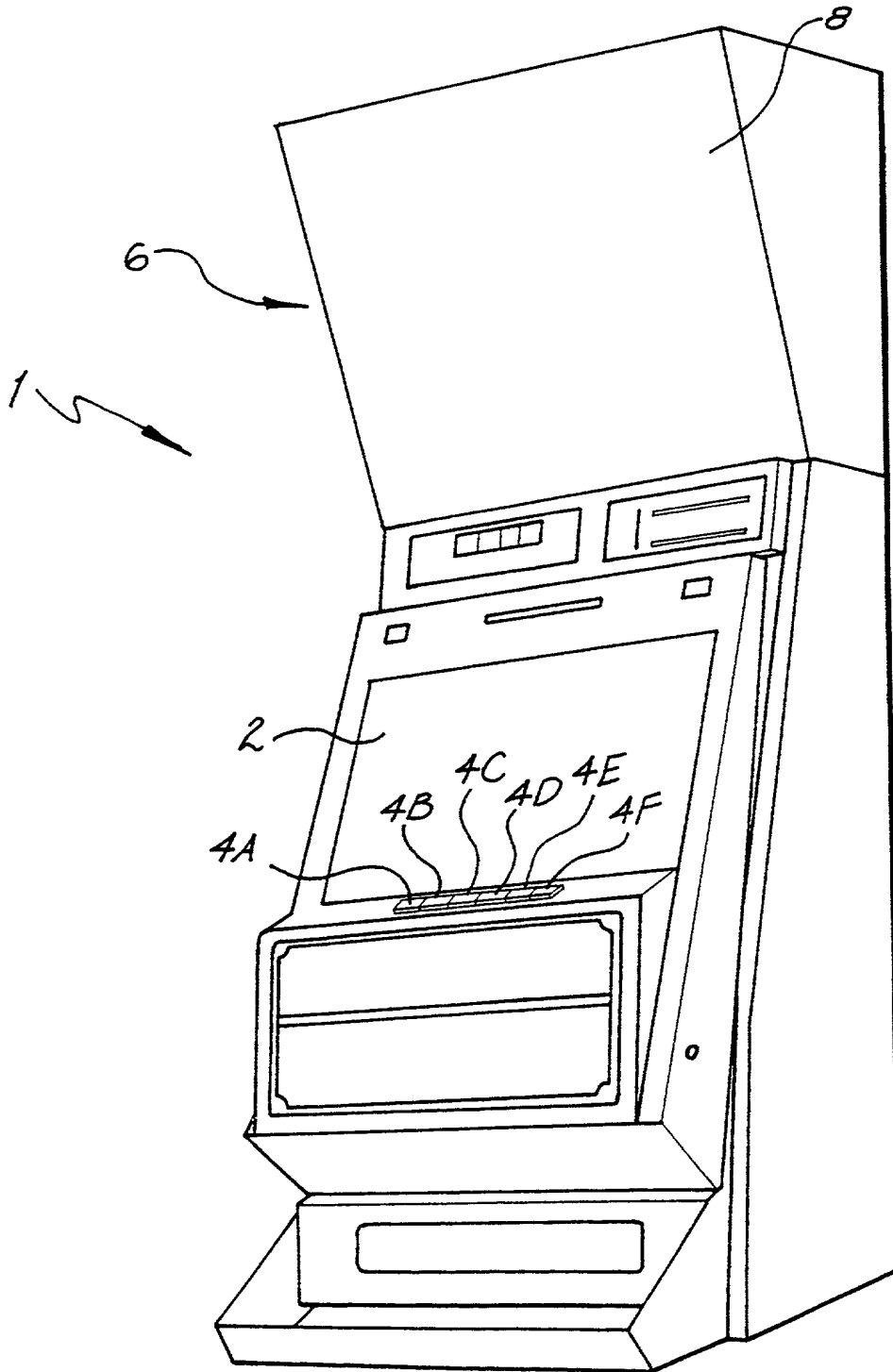
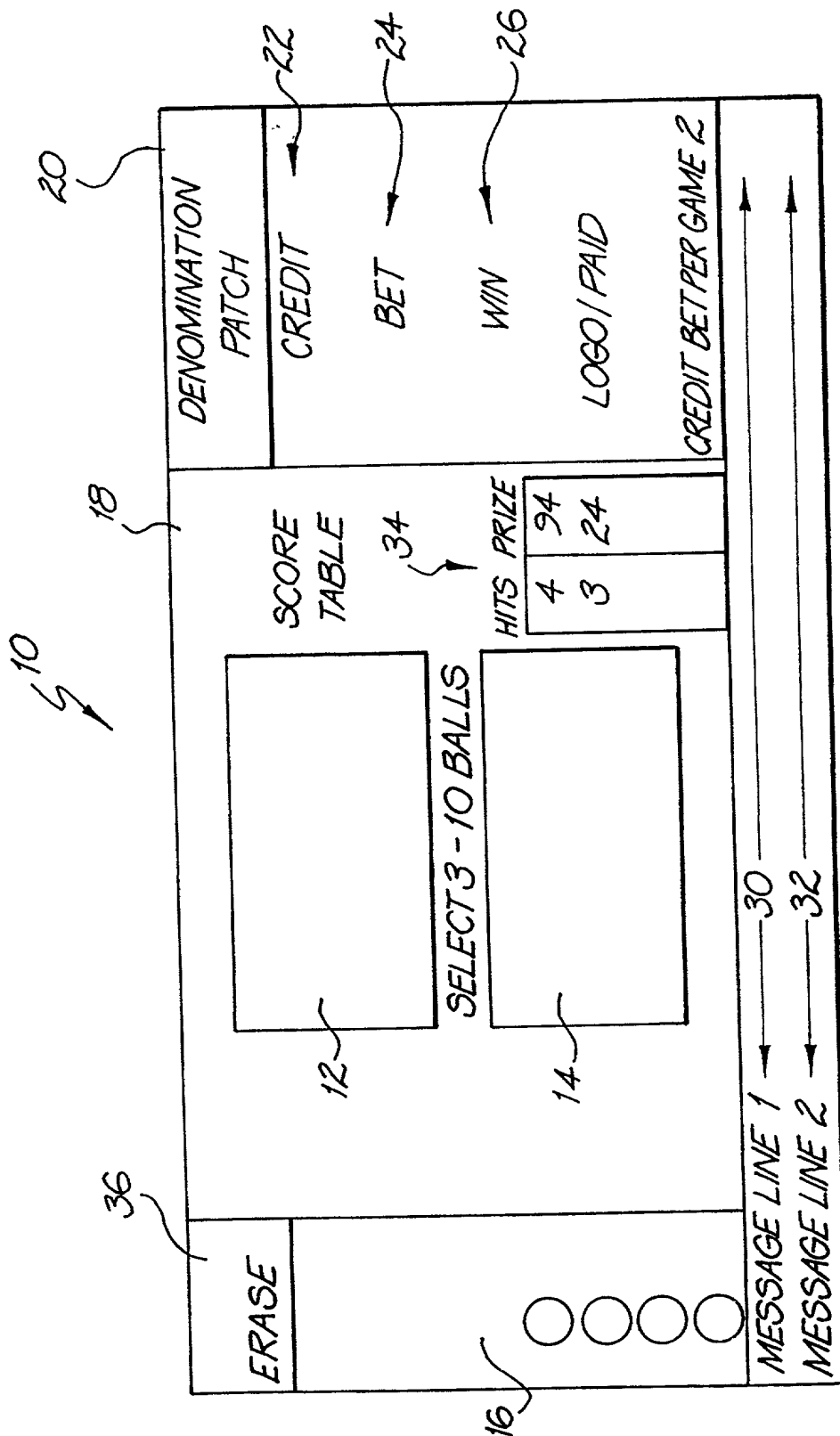


FIG. 1



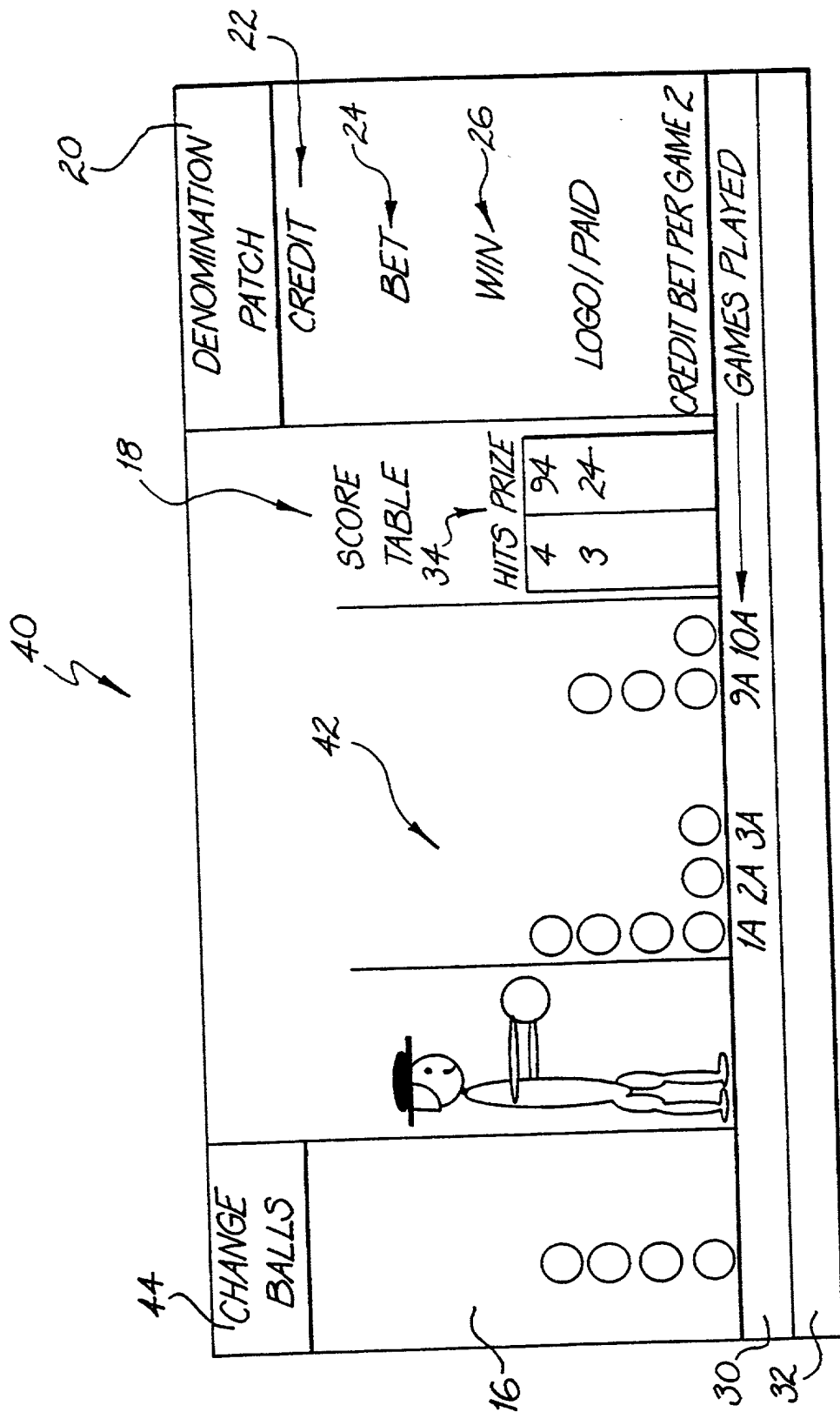


FIG. 3

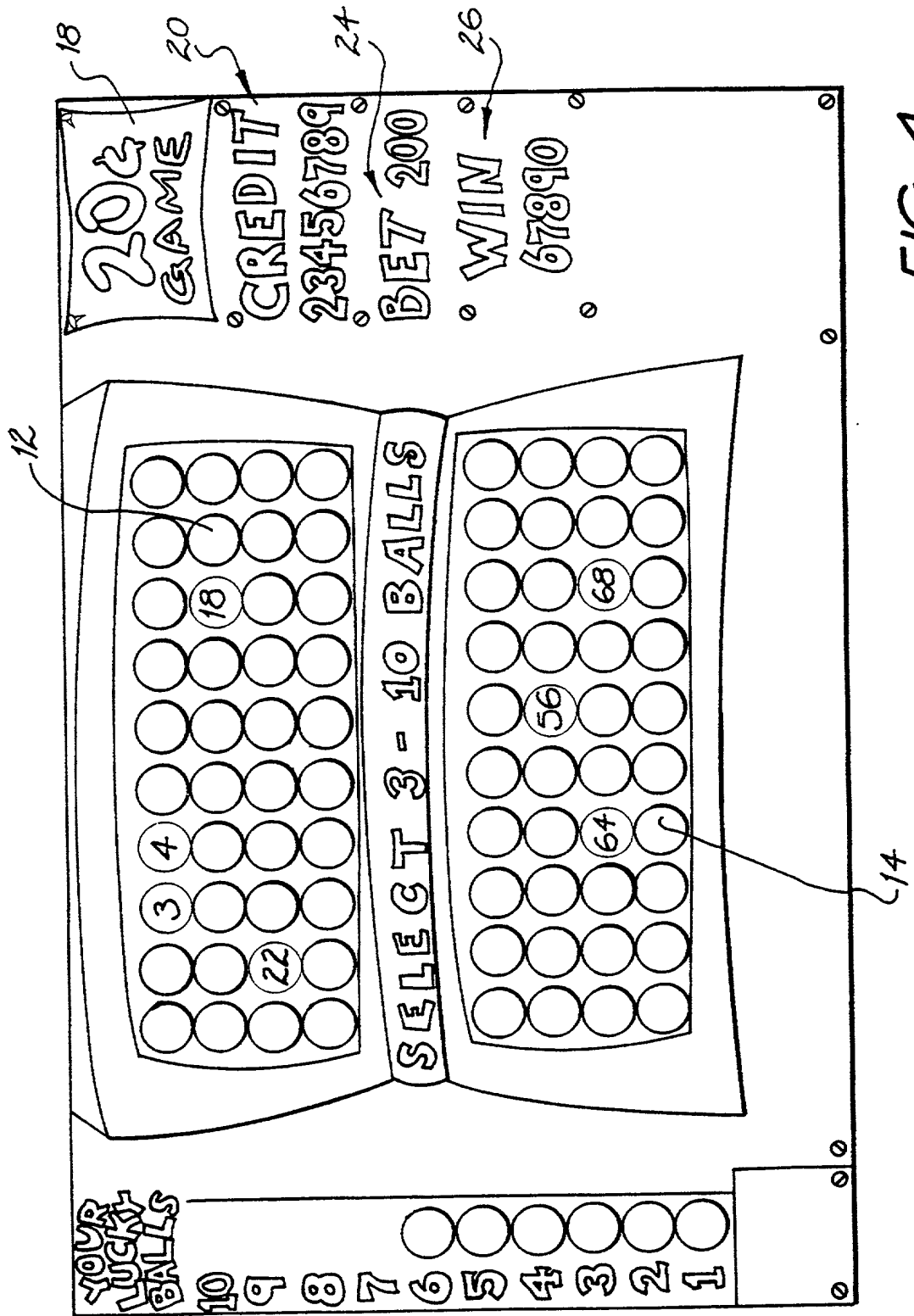


FIG. 4

**YOUR
LUCKY
BALLS**

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

**20¢
GAME**

**GAMES
PLAYED**

20000
20000

23456789

BET 200

Win

67890

PRIZES

90
12
5

FIND THE STARS TO MULTIPLY YOUR WIN
2ND MESSAGE LINE
18 POINT FONT

FIG. 5

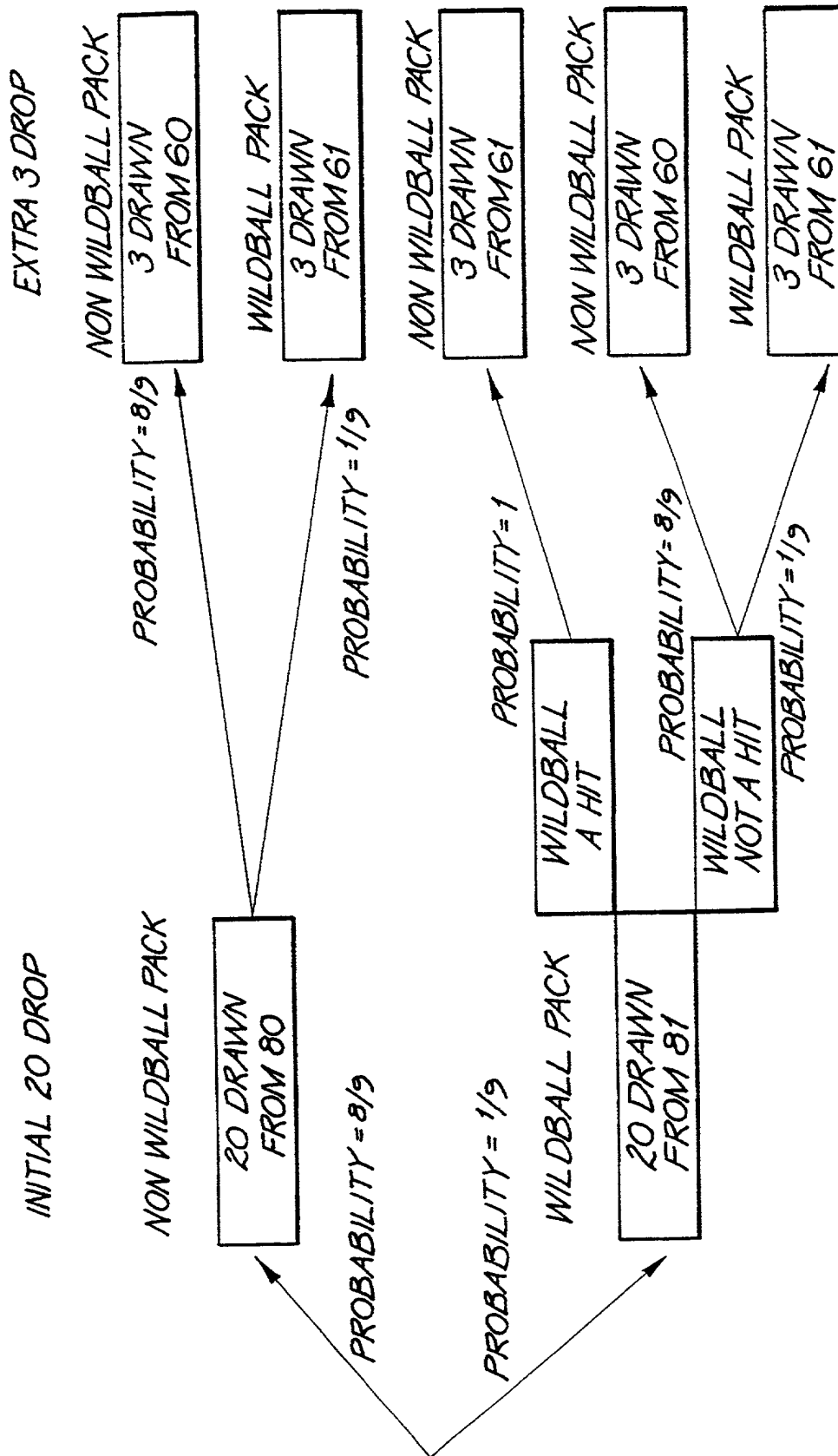


FIG. 6

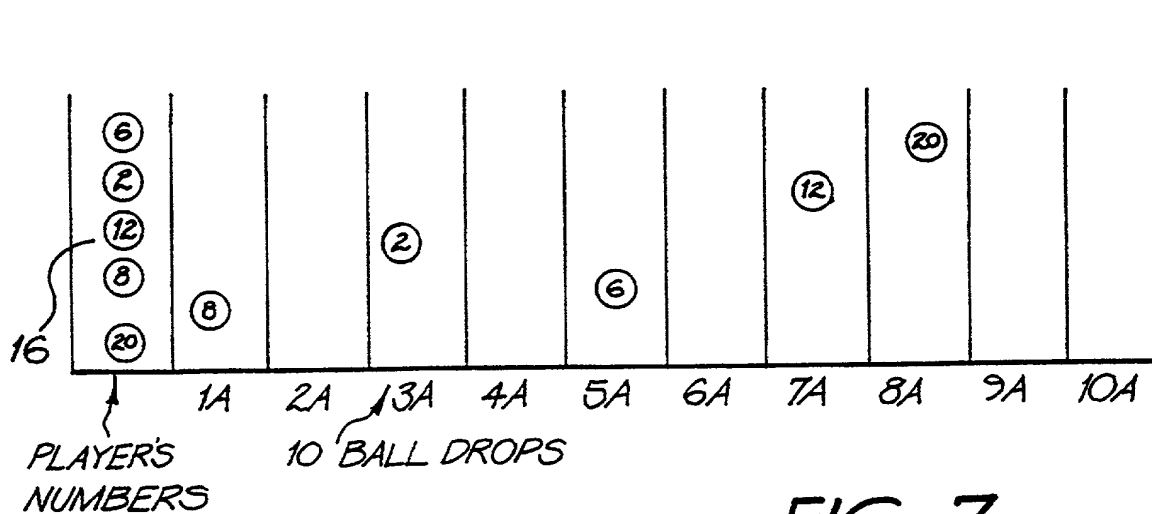


FIG. 7

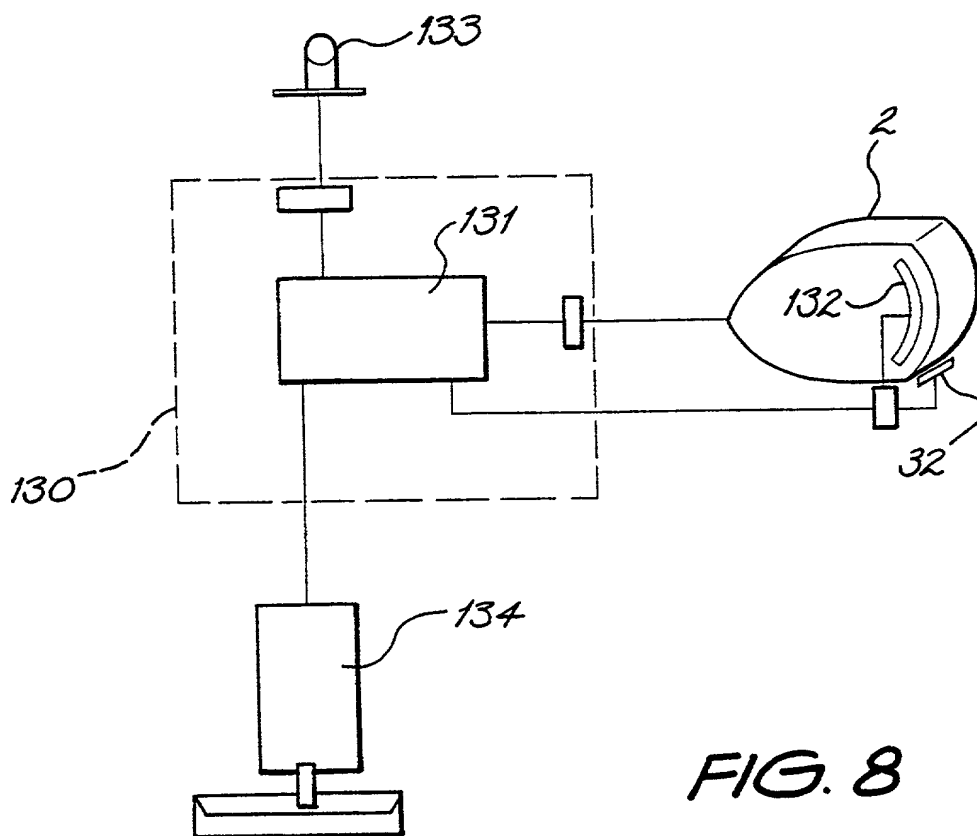


FIG. 8

EXTRA 3 FREE BALL									
NUMBER OF SPOTS MARKED									
HITS	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
2	3								
3	19	10	4						
4	87.556%	67	18	13	6				
5		87.520%	100	65	21	18			
6			87.454%	300	90	74	25	5	
7				87.201%	750	300	125	60	
8					87.670%	3000	600	150	
9						87.741%	5000	1250	
10							87.756%	10000	
									87.749%
HIT RATES									
OVERALL	610	19.39	9.68	28.74	15.23	44.20	24.13	14.73	

PROBABILITY OF WILDBALL = 1 CHANCE IN 9
AVERAGE PERCENTAGE = 87.581%

FIG. 9

Send Correspondence To: SHAHAN ISLAM, ESQ. Direct Telephone Number FRIEDMAN SIEGELBAUM, Seven Becker Farm Road, Roseland, New Jersey 07068-1757 (201) 992-1990				
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Full Name of 2nd Inventor	Last Name		First Name	Middle Name
Residence & Citizenship	City	State of Foreign Country	Country of Citizenship	
Home Address	No. and Street Address	City	State or Country	Zip Code

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing thereon.

Signature of 1st Inventor <i>Nicholas Bennett</i>	Signature of 2nd Inventor	Signature of 3rd Inventor	Signature of 4th Inventor
Date <i>7/4/99</i>	Date	Date	Date

FRIEDMAN ☐ SIEGELBAUM **DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY**

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below my name,

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below), or an original, first and joint inventor (if more than one inventor's name is listed below), of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled

"Gaming machine"

Title of Invention

the specification of which: ☒ is attached hereto ☐ was filed on _____ Application Serial No. _____
 (for declaration not accompanying application)

with amendment(s) filed on _____

(date(s) of all amendments)

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a).

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, §119/§172 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

EARLIEST FOREIGN APPLICATION(S), IF ANY, FILED PRIOR TO THE FILING DATE OF THE APPLICATION			
APPLICATION NUMBER	COUNTRY	DATE OF FILING (Day, Month, Year)	PRIORITY CLAIMED UNDER 35 U.S.C. 119/172
PO3595	AUSTRALIA	13 November 1996 (13/11/96)	Yes <u>Yes</u> No _____
			Yes _____ No _____

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code §112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

APPLICATION NUMBER	FILING DATE	STATUS		
		PATENTED	PENDING	ABANDONED

5- POWER OF ATTORNEY: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint Stanley I. Rosen (Reg. No. 19,441), Richard I. Samuel (Reg. No. 24,435), Shahan Islam (Reg. No. 32,507), Theresa A. O'Rourke (Reg. No. 40,747) and Nicholas J. DuBois (Reg. No. 44,719) whose address is Friedman Siegelbaum, Seven Becker Farm Road, Roseland, New Jersey, 07068-1757 as my attorneys, to prosecute this application, and to transact all business in the U. S. Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith.